should exercise due care and necessary precaution for the protection of the lockers provided to the customer and banks should review the systems in force for operation of safe deposits vaults/locker at their branches on an on-going basis and take necessary steps. The security procedure should be well documented and the concerned staff should be properly trained in the procedure. It has also been laid down that the internal auditors should ensure that the procedures are strictly adhered to.

Motor Vehicle Insurance claim

4191**.** SHRI N. R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of motor vehicle insurance claims settled during the last three years; company-wise and zone-wise;

(b) whether some officers have been found guilty of neglect of duty under the provision of conduct discipline and appeal rules;

(c) if so, the details thereof, company-wise and zone-wise;

(d) the number of officials suspended and the number of officials found guilty and still in service on the same post; and

(e) further action taken in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

World Banks' prediction for food shortage

4192. SHRI RAMDASAGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether President of World Bank at the meetings of World Bank/International Monitoring Fund held in Washington in April this year expressed concern that has rolled economies around the world and led to high food and energy prices with the result that in many developing countries the poor spent 75 per cent of their income on food;

(b) whether the agencies like the World Bank are predicting that international food shortage will last for three to four years; and

(c) if so, what steps Government has so far taken to meet its needs of food items at reasonable prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The World Bank President at the Meetings of World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) held recently in Washington expressed concern on the rising food prices and stated that the poor in the developing world spend as much as 75 per cent of their income on food. The World Bank has forcasted that the world foodgrain prices will remain high in the next three to four years. The Development Committee of the World Bank Group and IMF endorsed the "New Deal on Global Food Policy" to meet the food price crisis.

(c) Government of India has taken a number of steps to meet its needs of food items at reasonable prices including augmenting availability of wheat through public sector agencies,

banning export of wheat and non-basmati rice, increasing minimum support price, protecting vulnerable sections of society through Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antodaya Ann Yojana (AAY) and tariffs reductions, regulatory measures in futures trade, etc.

Urban housing shortage

4193. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether concerned over the rising shortage of housing in India, the National Housing Bank (NHB) has announced the launch of pro-poor housing finance schemes in India;

(b) if so, whether according to them, India is facing an acute crunch of housing space and the weaker classes remain the most suffered sections of the society;

(c) whether according to them, the country is reeling under an urban housing shortage of 24.7 million units, of which 99 per cent comprise the weaker sections;

(d) if so, the proposals that would be launched by the NHB; and

(e) by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) and (b) No such scheme has been announced by National Housing Bank (NHB). In order to focus on Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)/Low Income Groups (LIG) segment, NHB provides financial assistance to Public Housing Development Agencies frr low cost housing projects particularly for the EWS/LIG categories and for slum redevelopment.

(c) As per National Housing & Habitat Policy announced in December 2007, the urban housing shortage in the country is estimated at 24.7 million units of which 99 per cent pertain to EWS and LIG segment of the society.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Likely decline in economic growth

4194. MS. SUSHILAT1RIYA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's growth is likely to decline during the current year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL) : (a) As per Advance Estimates of Central Statistical Organisation, the growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at factor cost at constant (1999-2000) prices is estimated at 8.7 per cent in 2007-08 as compared to growth rate of 9.6 per cent in 2006-07.

(b) The deceleration in growth is mainly due to subdued growth in agriculture, industry and broad sector of'financing, insurance, real estate and business services'. A moderation in the world economic growth has also affected the GDP growth.

(c) The Government has taken various fiscal, monetary and administrative measures to maintain the momentum of growth with price stability. These measures include minimal